
VIETNAM

SCENARIO HANDBOOK



RAINBIRD

VIETNAM

SCENARIO DISK TWO

Scenario Disk Two runs only with the
Universal Military Simulator

by Edward Bever, PhD.

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Published Worldwide by Telecomsoft

Europe

Telecomsoft
74 New Oxford Street , WC1A 1PS
London

North America

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P.O. Box 2227,
Menlo Park CA 94026
415/322-0900

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Note for users:

For instructions on how to use the Scenario disk, please refer to your original UMS user instruction manual.

Hinweis an alle Benutzer:

Für die Anteilung zur Benutzung der Scenario-Diskette schlagen Sie bitte in Ihrem Original-UMS-Handbuch nach.

Note aux utilisateurs:

Veillez vous référer aux instructions de votre manuel d'utilisation UMS original pour pourvoir la disquette Scenario.

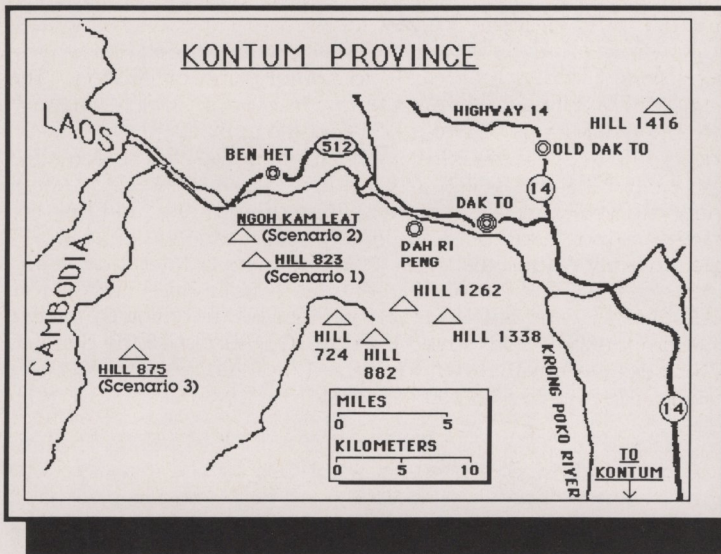
INTRODUCTION

On June 17, 1967, the "Sky Soldiers" of the Second Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade airlifted into the verdant highlands of western Kontum province. They knew why they came: the enemy had shelled the Special Forces camp at Dak To and then ambushed a patrol sent out to silence the mortar. They did not know what these events portended: one of the most intense, brutal battles of the Vietnam War, a series of knock-down, drag out slugfests every bit as bloody as "the Wilderness", Chateau-Thierry, and Iwo Jima.

The Americans' foe was not the popularly imagined Viet Cong peasant soldiers, guerillas clad in black pajamas and equipped with a miscellany of light weapons. Instead, it was uniformed regulars of the North Vietnamese Army, armed with modern automatic weapons fully equal to those carried by the American grunts. They were backed by light artillery that, if it could not equal the massive power of American howitzers and aircraft, was ideally suited to hit and run attacks that made up in surprise and precision what they lacked in weight and numbers. Supporting this first class fighting force was a sophisticated logistical tail that stretched from local depots hidden in the jungles of the Central Highlands to a complex network of clandestine supply routes snaking through southern Laos to the war machines of North Vietnam and its superpower backers, Russia and China.

The terrain, too, belied the popular conception of Vietnam as a guerilla war fought for control of villages and rice paddies and the peasants who farmed them. Instead, the field of battle was primeval jungle, double and triple canopy rain forest in which the only clearings were dense stands of fifteen to twenty foot tall bamboo. Beneath this vegetation, the land itself was a contortion of steep, rugged ridgelines alternating with narrow, twisting valleys. The temperature fluctuated from a chilly 55 degrees at night to 90 degrees or more during the day; in the steaming forest every move was an exertion, every step forward an act of will. To have simply marched through this wilderness would have been an accomplishment. To have fought a series of bitter battles across it testifies to the incredible stamina and dedication of the soldiers on both sides.

The 2nd of the 503rd found out how bad it was going to be just five days after its arrival, in its very first firefight. On June 22, while the battalion's Company A was returning from an uneventful patrol, its point squad ran into elements of the 6th Battalion, 24th NVA (North Vietnamese Army) Regiment. First one and then a second platoon



rushed down the narrow jungle trail to the aid of their comrades. As the reinforcements arrived, the enemy launched a murderous assault that overran them and killed all but a handful who scrambled back up the trail, exhausted and bloody.

Company B moved by helicopter to a nearby clearing, while C Company hurried overland. The troopers from B Company were gunned down as soon as they tried to move off the landing zone. C Company "humped" to the area by the afternoon, but it too was unable to reach the lost platoons. Only the next morning was it able to recover the 76 American bodies littering the jungle trail.

To add unintended insult to very real injury, when the shattered remnants of the Company returned to base, General Westmoreland, the American commander in Vietnam, told them that their gallant stand had saved Dak To and therefore they had just won a great victory. "Survivors ... remember wondering if he was talking about the same bloody fight they had just gone through." (1)

Sensing a major Communist drive, the American command shifted the rest of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division, the 5th and 8th ARVN (South Vietnamese) Airborne Battalions, and one battalion of the ARVN 42nd Regiment to the Dak To area by the

end of June. The 4th Infantry Division supplied a command element to coordinate the operations of these forces, while the 299th Engineer Battalion strove manfully to open the optimistically named Highway 14 that purported to connect Dak To to Kontum and civilization. The "highway" was actually little more than a mud track, though, so much of the supply for the allied forces had to come in by air.

Faced with this massive infusion of combat power, the NVA melted away. Special Forces led CIDG (Civilian Irregular Defense Group) troops managed to ambush a retreating North Vietnamese unit in mid July, but otherwise the month saw only a series of grueling patrols through empty jungle. In early August the NVA 174th Regiment isolated and threatened to overrun the weakest link in the allied chain, the battalion from the ARVN 42nd Regiment, but timely airmobile intervention by the two ARVN airborne battalions saved the day. On August 15 the battered ARVN forces were withdrawn, and the 173rd Airborne Brigade was transferred back to Tuy Hoa on the coast.



The Rock Regiment

503rd Infantry



HILL 823

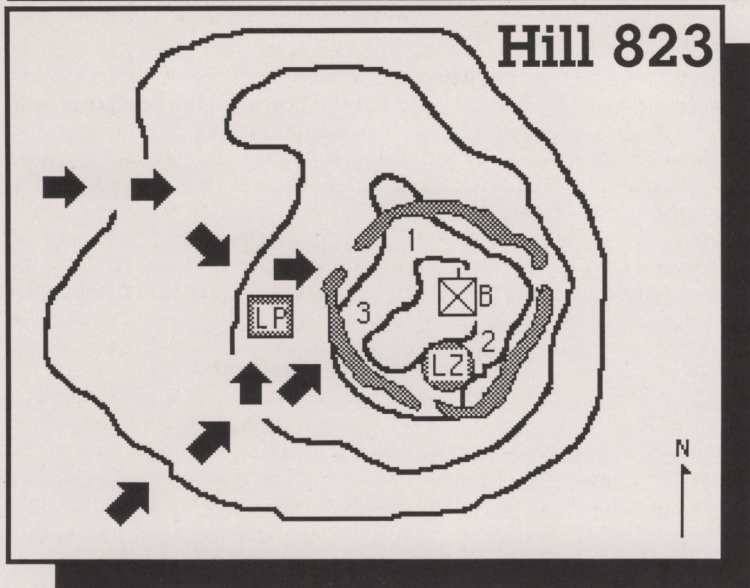
The enemy had been chased away but not defeated. In late October, intelligence began to indicate that the North Vietnamese were gearing up for another thrust against Dak To. The NVA 1st Division was reportedly shifting north from Pleiku Province, and at this point the 4th Division deployed only one mechanized battalion to the west of Kontum. Responding to the renewed threat, the 1st Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division flew in at the end of October, and was reinforced on the 1st of November by the 173rd Airborne Brigade's 4th Battalion, 503rd Regiment. The mission of the 4th Division's newly formed brigade was to clear the region southwest of Dak To once and for all.

The new brigade moved out on a broad front, with the 4th Division's 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry on the left, its 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry in the center, and the elite paratroopers of the 4th of the 503rd Airborne on the right, nearest Laos. The 3rd of the 12th ran into stiff opposition on a ridge near the site of the airborne's June debacle, but overcame it by calling in massive airstrikes. The 4th of the 503rd ran into greater difficulties as it strove to push the 66th NVA Regiment from Ngoh Kam Leat, a mountain southwest of the new Special Forces camp under construction at Ben Het.

Leaving the Battalion's B Company to help set up a firebase at Ben Het, the 4th of the 503rd moved southwest, with C Company on the right, D Company in the center, and A Company on the left. For two uneventful days the companies searched the area north and east of the mountain, drawing gradually farther from each other and from the firebase. Consequently, on November 5th Company B received orders to move by helicopter the following day to establish a firebase atop Hill 823.

Originally scheduled for 09:00, Company B's air assault on Hill 823 had to be postponed because five airstrikes did not clear enough space to land even one helicopter. Two more were required to blast enough room for a single Huey to hover a few feet above the ground while the paratroopers jumped out, and so the assault force only touched down at 13:20 hours. Moving quickly, the troops seized the crest of the hill, discovering evidence of recent occupation by the NVA, and swept on to set up a defensive perimeter about 150 meters in diameter.

Concerned that the northwestern slope offered the likeliest avenue of



attack, Captain George T. Baldridge, commander of B Company, directed his 3rd Platoon to establish a listening post about 250 meters in front of its lines. Scarcely had the two scouts taken up their position, however, when a flurry of shots rang from their direction. The platoon commander and four soldiers raced off to the LP's aid, but halfway there they were ambushed by a platoon of NVA and killed. Three other soldiers who had followed the initial rescue party were wounded, and only saved from a detachment of NVA soldiers by a volley of mortar shells ordered by Captain Baldridge as soon as he realized that his western perimeter was under attack.

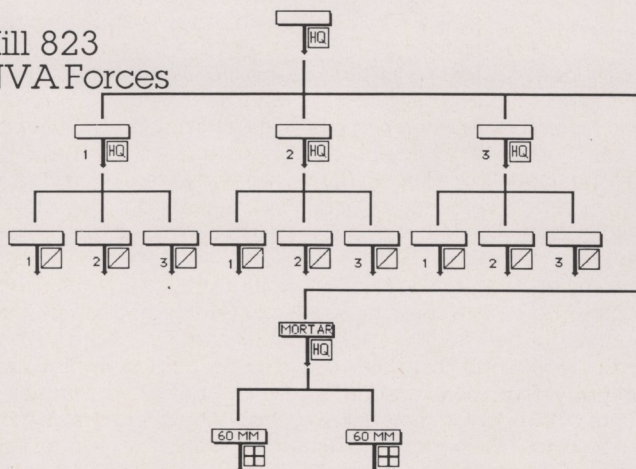
The enemy soldiers pressed their advantage, charging right up to the hastily constructed American defenses. A twenty minute firefight at close quarters ensued, from which the NVA ultimately retreated. Another charge followed shortly thereafter, and while it was also repulsed, it cost the company four more casualties. In the next few minutes, the Americans suffered even more losses as the NVA switched from ground assaults to a mortar barrage. The bombardment zeroed in on the command post, wounding Captain Baldridge and seven others. While the battalion commander, Colonel Johnson, flew in amidst a hail of fire

to drop of his executive officer and evacuate some of the more seriously wounded soldiers, at the end of just two hours, Company B had lost seven men killed and twenty wounded.

For the rest of the afternoon, the enemy harassed the company with sniper fire and grenade attacks. Artillery and mortar fire failed to suppress these, and darkness brought a grenade duel that lasted throughout the night. Mortars and rocket propelled grenades exploded among the tired Americans, and NVA soldiers made a series of small attacks. At about 0:330 one of these came close to penetrating the perimeter, but was repulsed after a short, sharp firefight. Artillery fire broke up another before it could get under way, and at dawn helicopter gunships and then F-100 fighter-bombers blasted the area beyond the perimeter. Six NVA made one last charge at first light, and as they retreated firing erupted all along the western perimeter.

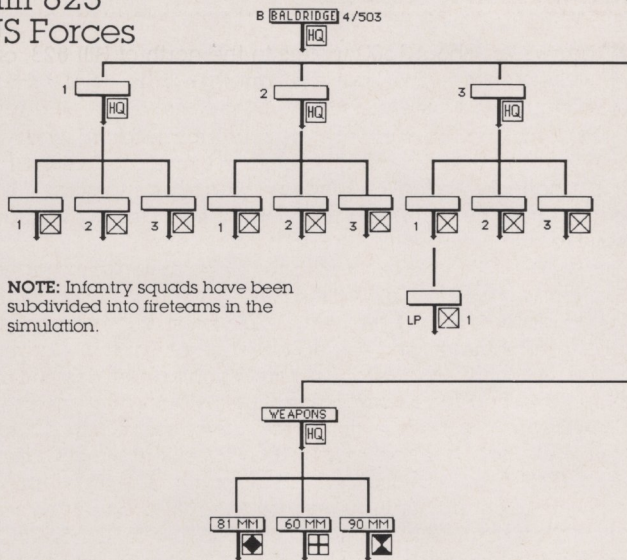
Once this firing died down the Americans were able to move beyond the perimeter, supported by the company mortars. A patrol discovered extensive enemy fortifications some distance away, and began the dangerous process of mopping up. Some of the Communist wounded continued to fight, and sniper fire harassed the Americans, but the fight for Hill 823 was over. Despite substantial casualties, the Americans had won.

Hill 823 NVA Forces



NOTE: NVA HQ are not represented in the simulation.

Hill 823 US Forces



NOTE: Infantry squads have been subdivided into fireteams in the simulation.

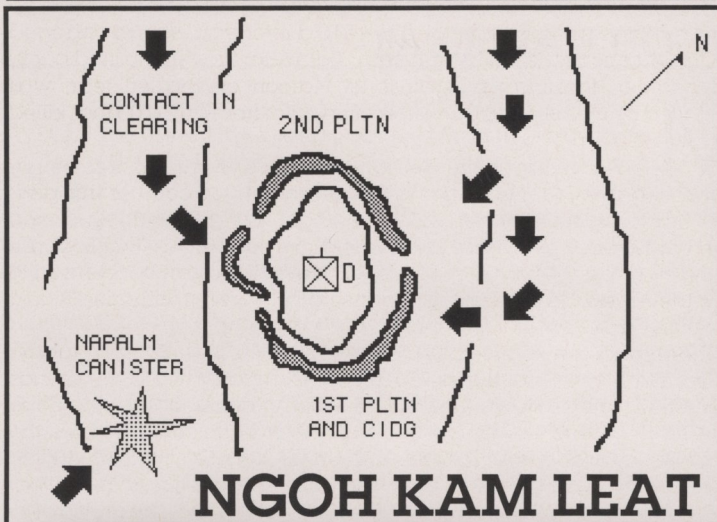
NGOH KAM LEAT

Meanwhile, about 1500 meters to the north of Hill 823, on the slopes of Ngoh Kam Leat itself, another of the 4th of the 503rd's companies was engaged in a bitter fire-fight. The unit involved was Company D, an understrength unit formed from what would have been, in the absence of the American's overwhelming artillery and air support, the battalion's heavy weapons platoons. It had stumbled into a hornet's nest of enemy opposition, and was struggling just to survive.

Company D's battle had begun when the point element had found a communications wire leading off the main trail up a side path into the rugged uplands of the Ngoh Kam Leat. A 200 meter recon along the wire discovered a pith helmet, and so Captain Thomas Baird, D Company's commander, requested and received permission to move his unit up the side trail to try to find the source of the wire. Moving very warily, the captain ordered two squads to execute a cloverleaf search pattern on both sides of the trail to detect any ambush positions, and when they returned, moved the whole company up the path. The time was 12:30.

As the understrength unit moved up the hill, it deployed its 2nd Platoon in the lead and its 1st Platoon in the rear. Between them trudged a 30-man Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) platoon of Montagnard mercenaries. The company snaked upwards for about a half an hour, until the point squad reached a knoll about 100 meters short of the main ridgeline. Discovering evidence of recent NVA activity, the company consolidated in a perimeter and sent out squads in a cloverleaf again. Once they returned, Captain Baird planned to move by bounds to the ridge.

Scarcely had 2nd Platoon's two lead squads moved out, when they came under machine-gun fire from up the ridgeline. Reacting quickly, 2nd Platoon's Lieutenant Burton pulled his men back and ordered the 1st Squad to move left to flank the enemy position, supported by fire from the 2nd Squad on the right. 1st Squad came under fire at a clearing a short distance forward, though, and so Baird ordered 2nd Platoon to withdraw to the Company perimeter. 2nd and 3rd Squads covered 1st Squad's retreat, but as the Platoon tried to move back it was pinned down by fire from an estimated enemy company. Captain Baird called in gunships and artillery fire from Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 319th Artillery at Ben Het. Covered by the sudden crash of explosions, 2nd Platoon broke contact and retreated.



As the platoon struggled to rejoin the company, Captain Baird shifted 1st Platoon to compensate for the fact that the CIDG men were drifting back down the trail, away from the fighting. He moved 1st Platoon up and detailed his first Sergeant, Sfc. William Collins, to re-form the CIDG unit as a rear guard. This effort received unexpected help from a squad from Company A that had gotten separated from its parent unit and then followed the sounds of battle to D Company. With this stiffening, the Montagnard's coalesced into the rear element of the perimeter as the 2nd Platoon moved back to form the front.

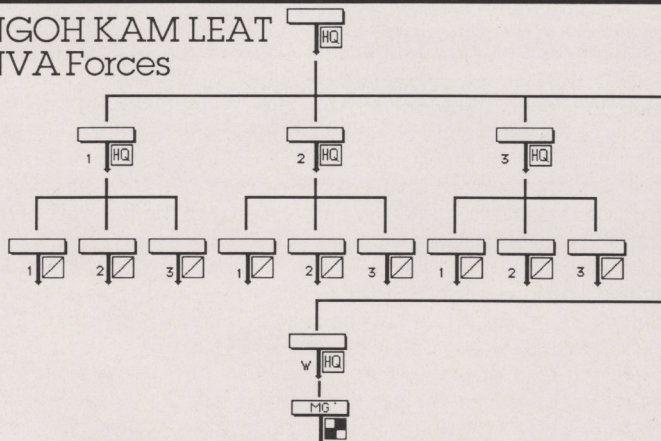
Company D consolidated its perimeter just in time, for the NVA launched two platoon sized attacks against 2nd Platoon almost as soon as it deployed. While they were beaten off, the company began taking significant casualties. Among them were Captain Baird and the artillery forward observer, Captain Lawrence Clewley. As usual, enemy snipers looked for the command element, easily identifiable by their constant use of radios, and attempted to disrupt the unit by picking them off. Fortunately, Captain Baird was able to continue despite his wound, while the forward air controller was able to fill in for the artillery observer.

Sniper fire cracked continually, and the NVA launched several more assaults as the afternoon wore on. At about 1500 hours an NVA platoon

attacked 2nd Platoon again, and at 1510 a reinforced squad engaged the CIDG troops further to the right rear. Both attacks were pushed back, and another, forming up against 1st Platoon on the left rear, was forestalled by a well placed canister of napalm from an F-100 that killed 15 NVA soldiers in one fell swoop. Thereafter, the enemy ceased to charge the American lines, but kept up a constant fire from ever-constricting positions surrounding the perimeter. To counter this pressure, American artillery harassed the jungle along the ridgeline, and gunships hovered overhead to provide direct supporting fire. Because the dense foliage distorted or concealed the colored smoke released to mark the American positions, one gunship delivered a withering fire on Company D by mistake, wounding one paratrooper.

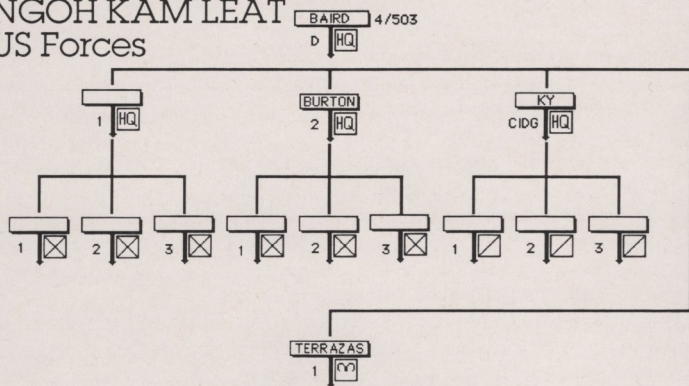
Shortly thereafter, the main volume of NVA fire fell off abruptly. Around the same time, the squad from A Company heard the sounds of a firefight farther down the slope. Surmising correctly that the noise came from the lead elements of Company A, hurrying to the rescue, the squad leader took a compass azimuth on the sounds and radioed it to his comrades. Following his directions, A Company reached the beleaguered unit's perimeter around 17:00 hours and moved in to reinforce it.

NGOH KAM LEAT NVA Forces

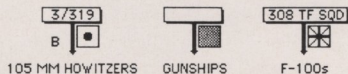


NOTE: NVA HQ units are not included in the simulation.

NGOH KAM LEAT US Forces



SUPPORTING UNITS



NOTE: US squads have been subdivided into fireteams in the simulation.

When a platoon from A Company attempted to move up the ridge as dusk fell, it met with a withering fire that killed two men and wounded three others, so the two companies' settled in for a night filled with sniper, RPG, and mortar fire. The next morning the NVA were gone. Companies A and D spent the day patrolling the area and evacuating casualties.

HILL 875

For the 503rd's 4th Battalion the battle was over, temporarily; once its companies linked up at the new firebase on Hill 823 the 1st of the 503rd fought its way in to replace it. Meanwhile, the Brigade's 2nd Battalion air assaulted into battle, and the 42nd ARVN Regiment and 2nd and 3rd ARVN Airborne Battalions fought a furious action against the NVA northeast of Dak To. The 4th American Infantry Division continued to work its way southwestward from one ridgeline to the next, as the allied forces pushed the NVA away from the base at Dak To. The troopers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade got into a vicious firefight at close quarters on November 13 with elements of the 3rd Battalion, 174th NVA Regiment, and on November 15 an NVA mortar barrage set off an ammo dump at Dak To, destroying several aircraft and disrupting allied logistical support.

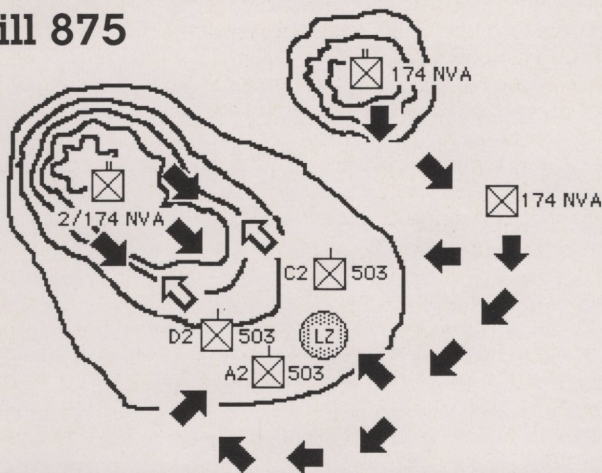
As the fighting heated up on all fronts in the days thereafter, the battle of Dak To moved toward its climax. On November 18 a Special Forces-led "Mike Force" encountered an estimated company of the NVA 174th Regiment on the slopes of Hill 875, well to the southwest of Dak To. Calling in artillery and airstrikes, the recon unit withdrew, and the American command tapped 2nd Battalion, 503rd Airborne to attack up the mountain the next day. It would move up the north slope with Companies D and C abreast and Company A in reserve. While waiting, the reserve was to clear a landing zone to permit resupply, evacuation of casualties, and, if necessary, reinforcements to land.

On the morning of the 19th, the troopers of C and D Companies waited while air and artillery pestered suspected enemy positions on the hill. When the preparatory fires abated, the two units began to move up the 100 meter wide ridgeline. They moved forward unopposed at first, but around 1030 came under fire from the first enemy line of defense. The American paratroopers returned fire and called in artillery and airstrikes, but in the next four hours were able to advance only about 50 meters.

Suddenly, waves of screaming NVA from the 2nd Battalion, 174th Regiment charged down out of their bunkers against the exhausted American assault troops. The Americans abruptly switched from attack to defense as platoon-sized NVA units crashed down upon them, supported by a withering fire from snipers, machine-guns, and RPGs. The paratroopers desperately dug in, and only barely managed to repel the attackers.

Their comrades in A Company were not so lucky. At the same time

Hill 875



that the 2nd Battalion attacked down the slope, the 174th's entire 1st Battalion stormed the rear elements of the American battalion, who were straining to clear the heavy jungle for a landing zone. The NVA had moved down the western slope of Hill 875 along trails specially cleared for the maneuver, and assaulted both flanks and the rear of the American company simultaneously. The grunts fought valiantly, but the ferocious weight of the attack was too great. Two platoons disappeared, and the command group at the center of the position was wiped out in hand to hand combat. The remnants of the shattered company fled upslope.

The two surviving companies were heavily outnumbered and under attack from all directions. Helicopters from the 335th Assault Helicopter Company tried to drop supplies to them, but came under intense fire. Six of the machines plummeted from the sky, and most of the munitions fell outside the perimeter. More men were lost trying to recover them, and an American plane added to the carnage when it dropped a bomb into the center of the Company C's position, amidst the company command group and the wounded. Forty-two paratroopers died, and another 45 were injured.

Shortly thereafter, American artillery began to fall within the perimeter. So few of the battalion's radios still worked that it took several

agonizing minutes for a sergeant to contact the artillery and re-adjust its fire. By this time, so few of the battalion's leaders still lived that the unit itself was paralyzed, incapable of anything but holding on for dear life.

As night fell, the NVA kept up the pressure. Volleys of grenades arc into the American positions, accompanied by cries of "Now you ~Chieu Hoi~, G.I." (referring to the "open arms" program designed to entice NVA to desert). The temperature dropped into the low 50's, and the few ponchos and blankets available were given to the wounded. It was a night in which most wondered if they would see the light of day. Many didn't.

While the men of the 2nd Battalion huddled in their hastily dug foxholes, their comrades in the 4th of the 503rd prepared to move to their rescue. In the morning of the 20th, the fresh battalion begin the arduous trek up the ridgeline, which fortunately was unopposed. Along the way, the men found the bitter debris of battle: broken weapons, bloody bandages, and dozens upon dozens of dead. So great was the carnage that the grunts began to ask aloud if they would find anyone alive at all.

It took the 4th Battalion until 2200 hours to cover the 7000 yards to the 2nd Battalion's position. The relief force did find survivors, who unabashedly wept when the rescuers arrived. The battered battalion had spent the day under sporadic fire, and had managed to clear a new LZ, but the NVA had overrun half of it. The next day, a third LZ was cleared well within the perimeter, and helicopters could finally began evacuating the wounded.

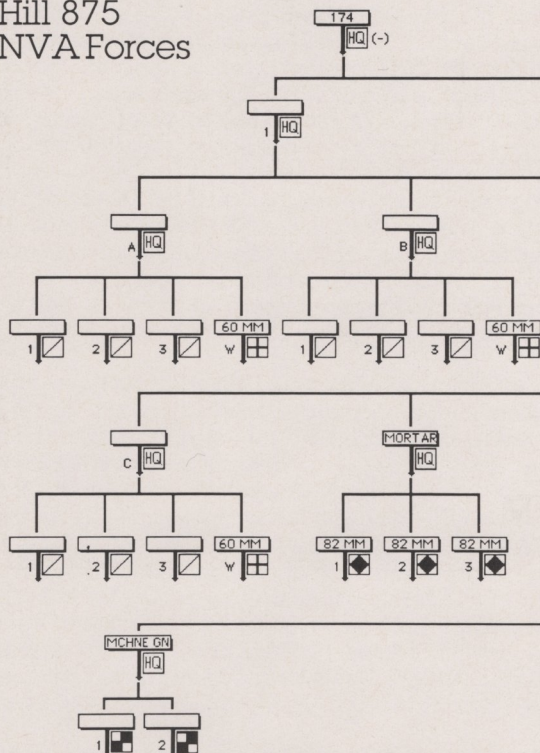
Meanwhile, air and artillery assets battered the hilltop for seven hours straight. At 1500 hours, 4th Battalion staged for an assault up the slope, but just before it began, an intense NVA mortar barrage tore into its ranks, killing and wounding the men huddled six to eight in a foxhole. When the attack did get under way, it immediately ran into fire from hidden bunker complexes. Grenades, flamethrowers, recoilless rifles, and rocket launchers proved useless against them; only 20 pound satchel charges hurled directly through apertures or napalm poured in and set alight by grenades silenced their defenders. The NVA resisted stubbornly and even launched sudden sharp counter-attacks, but as night fell the paratroopers had taken two trenchlines and advanced to within 250 feet of the crest. Here, however, they were halted by a new set of bunkers, and, having lost 50 casualties in two hours, fell back to the battalion perimeter below.

No new assault was attempted on November 22. Instead, artillery and airstrikes worked over the top of Hill 875, and a battalion from the 4th Infantry Division, the 1st of the 12th, was airlifted into an LZ on the

south slope of the mountain. It moved up to a jump off point, and dug in for the night. The paratroopers on the north slope took a well deserved rest, and prepared for the final assault on the morrow.

All morning of the 23rd the air and artillery strikes continued, and when, at 1100 hours, the infantry attacks moved out, the 2nd Battalion of the 174th NVA Regiment was all but gone. Mortars from the 1st and 3rd Battalions on nearby hills kept up harassing fires, but the paratroopers and infantry advanced steadily up the mountain behind a rolling

Hill 875 NVA Forces

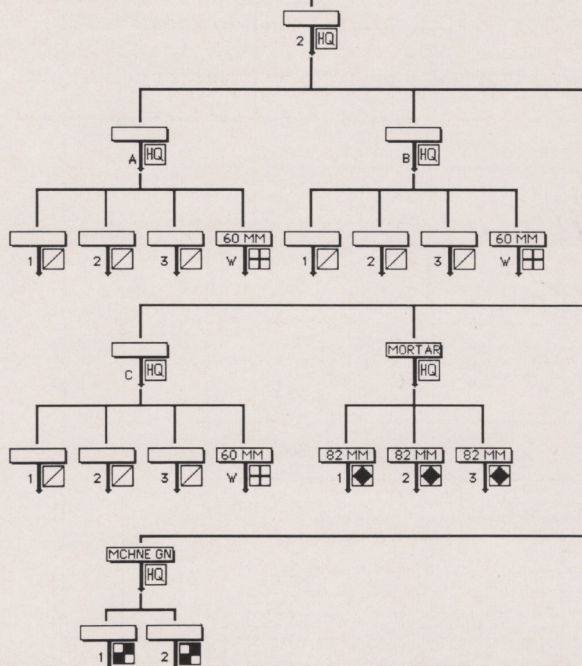


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NOTE: Not all NVA elements represented were engaged in the action simulated.

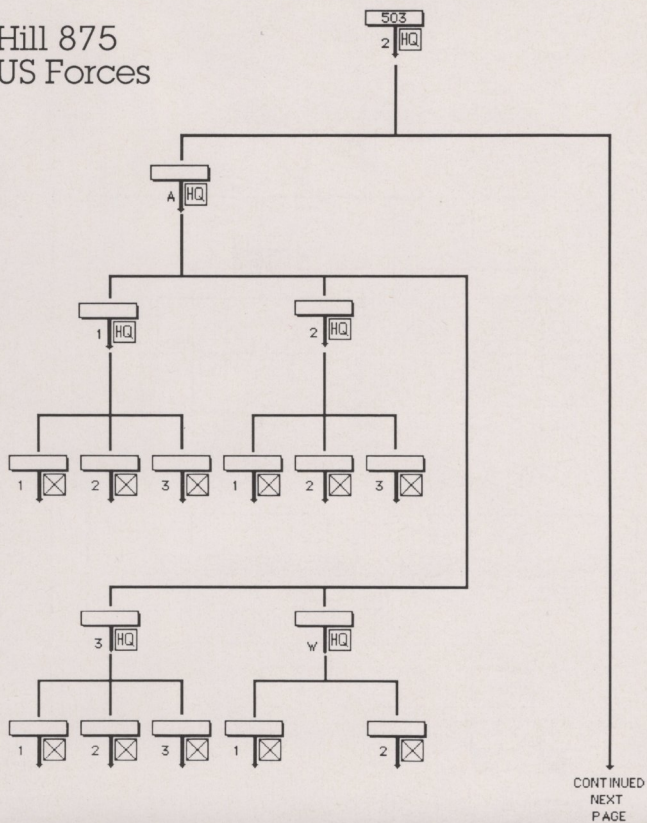
Hill 875 NVA Forces Continued

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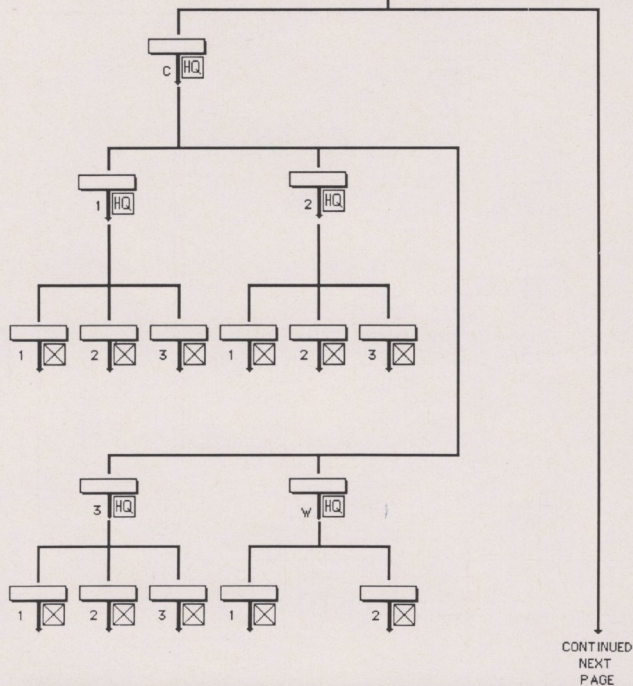
barrage. At 1140 November 23, Thanksgiving Day, lead elements of the 4th of the 503rd and the 1st of the 12th linked up on the crest of Hill 875. The battle of Dak To was over.

Hill 875 US Forces



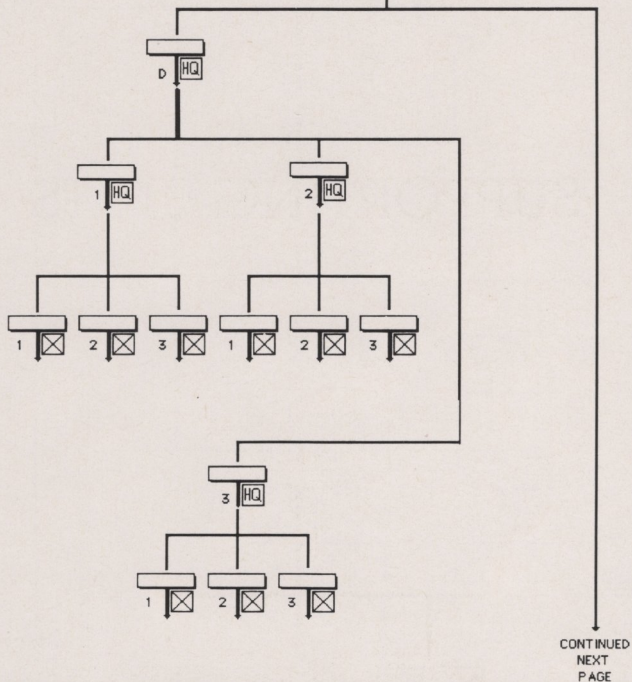
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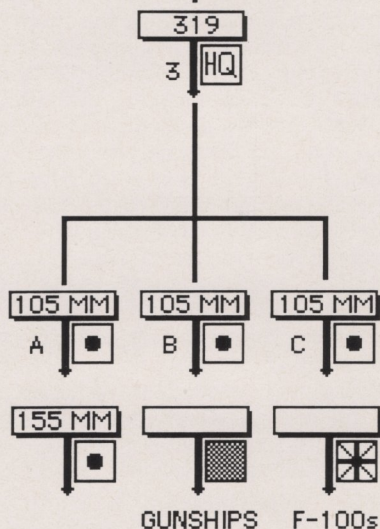
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Hill 875
US Forces
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SUPPORTING UNITS



ASSESSMENT

As the victorious Americans examined the captured positions atop Hill 875, they found carved in the log reinforcements of one of the bunkers the date 3/7/67, a date more than eight months before the battle had begun. Similarly, they found that the routes used by the 174th's 1st Battalion to get into position behind Company A, 2/503rd had been prepared well in advance, with steps and banisters set in the steep slopes. The troops of the 174th Regiment were equipped with new uniforms, arms, and ammunition, and had been brought up to full strength with reinforcements shortly before the climactic battle.

The fight for Hill 875, in short, had been a set up. The 2nd of the 503rd had walked into a trap, a trap that had been carefully planned and painstakingly prepared months in advance. The American soldiers showed exceptional bravery in the face of overwhelming odds, and American officers demonstrated laudable skill at coordinating the activities of infantry, artillery, helicopters, and airplanes, but the fact remains that the battle was fought on ground of the enemy's choosing according to a timetable orchestrated by the enemy long in advance.

The battle for Hill 875 was not the only engagement near Dak To that showed signs of being a set up. The communications wire "carelessly" left across Company D, 4/503rd's path; the pith helmet "casually" dropped a few hundred meters up the trail; other traces of activity left at the crest of the knoll; all this carelessness in an area where the Americans had been operating for several days, by an enemy that made a fetish of stealth and discipline. And then the sudden crash of arms from concealed positions along the ridgeline. In this case, though, the American commander exhibited exemplary caution in his maneuvers up the trail, and probably thereby saved his men from a devastating ambush.

Similarly, the prepared positions on Hill 823 suggest that the NVA had seen it as a potential Hill 875, probably one of many. In this case, the American airmobile assault directly onto the hilltop put the attackers in the bunkers' rear, and so negated their effectiveness. However, the NVA simply moved away, living to fight another day, just as they did from Ngoh Kam Leat, and, except for the sacrificial 2nd Battalion of the 174th, from Hill 875. Just as they did, in fact, from the Battle of Dak To as a whole.

Since the end of the war, it has become clear that the Battle of Dak To

itself was a set up, part of an intricate series of strategic maneuvers that began with the "border fights" of mid-1967 and ended in the climactic Tet offensive that turned the tide of the Vietnam War in 1968. From early 1967 at least, the North Vietnamese high command had been preparing a three stage offensive that it hoped would bring down the South Vietnamese government and force the Americans out of the country. The first stage, which involved the battles of Dak To, Song Be, and Loc Ninh, drew American attention to and tied down American assets in peripheral areas of South Vietnam, far from what was to be the decisive battle. The second stage involved the siege of the Marine combat base at Khe Sanh, a position reminiscent of the French outpost at Dien Bien Phu, whose fall had been the closing act of the Vietnamese War of Independence. The parallel rested in part on the physical settings of the two posts: isolated strongpoints totally dependent on supply by air. It also rested, however, on a similar pattern of events: prior to the siege of the French force the Vietnamese had launched a series of peripheral attacks similar to Dak To.

The Americans became obsessed with the Dien Bien Phu analogy; from President Johnson on down they were enthralled both by the possibility of a huge, winable conventional battle and by the threat of a massive defeat. In the event, neither occurred, because the Siege of Khe Sanh itself was but another layer of deception, another diversion designed to tie the Americans down psychologically and physically far from the decisive battle. This decisive battle, the third phase of the Communist strategy, was a totally unexpected blow to the heart of the South Vietnamese society, a simultaneous attack on every major town and city in the country, from the national capital at Saigon to most province capitals to dozens of district seats.

The attacks stunned both the South Vietnamese and Americans and achieved initial success, but stolid resistance and rapid counter-attacks blunted the Communist assaults and in most cases turned them into routs. Nevertheless, the damage had been done. The South Vietnamese people did not rise in revolt as the Northerners had hoped, but the American people saw the light at the end of the tunnel go out. The highest officials of government, who had brought America into the war, lost faith that victory could be achieved in any reasonable time frame at any reasonable cost. Robert McNamara resigned as Secretary of Defense, President Johnson dropped out of the race for a second term, and General Westmoreland turned over command to General Abrams. The Americans called a halt to the bombing of the north and soon entered into peace negotiations, and changed their strategy in the

South from one of victory through attrition to withdrawal through "Vietnamization."

Dak To was just an incident in this larger drama, one among many battles that ranged from the primeval forests to the rural farmlands to the heart of Saigon. Yet it was, in its way, as typical as any battle of the war we fought in South Vietnam. It was typical in the long days spent humping fruitlessly through the tropical heat. It was typical in the sudden violence of ambushes and chance encounters, and typical in the grinding brutality of infantry assaults against heavily fortified, expertly camouflaged strongpoints. Dak To was typical in the bravery shown by so many of the American soldiers, and typical in the dedication shown by their officers. It was typical in the hollowness of our victories, and ultimately in the fruitlessness of our sacrifices.

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Playtester: Dr. John Stanoch



NOTES

A. SCENARIO SOURCES

The "Hill 823" and "Ngoh Kam Leat" scenarios are based primarily on material contained in:

Allan W. Sandstrum, "Three Companies at Dak To," in "Seven Fire-fights in Vietnam", John A. Cash, John Albright, and Allan W. Sandstrum (1985).

The "Hill 875" scenario is based on material contained in:

F. Clifton Berry, "Sky Soldiers" (1987);

Shelby L. Stanton, "The Rise and Fall of an American Army" (1985)

B. OTHER SOURCES USED

Edward Bever, "Conflict in Vietnam" (1986).

Tom Carhart, "Battles and Campaigns in Vietnam" (1984).

Stanley Karnow, "Vietnam: A History" (1984).

"Infantry in Vietnam", Albert Garland (1967).

David Richard Palmer, "Summons of the Trumpet" (1978).

"Vietnam: The History and the Tactics", ed. John Pimlot (1982).

C. REFERENCES

(1) Berry, p. 84.

(2) Stanton, p. 166.



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